House Select Committee on Community Relations, Law Enforcement and Justice Public Comments Report - LINC

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
12/02/2020 05:38 AM	Justice	Our youth, the future Sarah Kuhl	One key strategy I would urge the Committee to advocate for is the adoption of School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements in all local school districts. Raise the Age legislation, passed in 2017, encourages these partnerships. I believe in finding as many alternatives to punitive measures and to involving law enforcement as possible, and strongly recommend increasing needed resources to nurture development and implementation of these SJP agreements. Currently, fewer than half of North Carolina school districts have these agreements in place. This is progress, but North Carolina can do better. SJP agreements are especially important because nearly half of all juvenile arrests occur in school, and a disproportionate number of those arrests are of children of color. We need to keep children in school and out of jail, and SJP agreements help do just that. I also want to lift up recommendations to increase funding for support and re-entry services for formerly incarcerated parents and their families. Over 25,000 children in North Carolina have incarcerated parents. Such circumstances can lead to toxic levels of stress that can have a devastating impact on a child's development, learning, and behavior. North Carolina can provide family members of incarcerated individuals with the social and practical support they need to cope during the extremely challenging time of family separation. Services can range from family reunification planning to school-based support groups for kids. We must do better for our youth, they are the future.
12/02/2020 05:45 AM	Justice	Ms. Robin Sanchez	I would urge the Committee to advocate for is the adoption of School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements in all local school districts. Raise the Age legislation, passed in 2017, encourages these partnerships. I believe in finding as many alternatives to punitive measures and to involving law enforcement as possible, and strongly recommend increasing needed resources to nurture development and implementation of these SJP agreements. Currently, fewer than half of North Carolina school districts have these agreements in place. This is progress, but North Carolina can do better. SJP agreements are especially important because nearly half of all juvenile arrests occur in school, and a disproportionate number of those arrests are of children of color. We need to keep children in school and out of jail, and SJP agreements help do just that.
12/02/2020 07:15 AM	Justice	Jay Weatherly	As a former employee of the NCDJJDP and therapeutic instructor of programs committed to providing alternate pathways for Juveniles caught up in the "correctional" sytstem, I urge the Committee to advocate for the adoption of School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements in all local school districts. Raise the Age legislation, passed in 2017, encourages these partnerships. I believe in finding as many alternatives to punitive measures and to involving law enforcement as possible, and strongly recommend increasing needed resources to nurture development and implementation of these SJP agreements. Currently, fewer than half of North Carolina school districts have these agreements in place. This is progress, but North Carolina can do better. SJP agreements are especially important because nearly half of all juvenile arrests occur in school, and a disproportionate number of those arrests are of children of color. We need to keep children in school and out of jail, and SJP agreements help do just that.
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12/02/2020 07:41 AM	Justice	Stop criminalizing ptsd Kj Schroer	US slavery may have ceased in 1865 however there were at that time millions of folks who were slave owners and to date their descendants carry the same ideals that once allowed southern heritage. Additionally there was minimal effort ever put in to collectively acknowledge and heal the impact that slavery had on black Americans leaving a deeply traumatized group of folks with minimal resources. Whereas racism is still very prevalent today and black folks face these realities every day on top of having carried the burdens of PTSD from slavery passed down from generation to generation it is VITAL these truths are acknowledged within the education system in NC. Teachers, administrators and staff need specific training about how to aid in healing of these atrocities as opposed to continuing to be given power to enact further harm by using the school disciplinary system unjustly against this marginalized segment of folks collectively walking in bodies of darker skin tones. Not only is this

	ctical but it's also a moral obligation of all those who have benefited because of racism to take up the cate, hold others accountable and create new policies that lighten the load and bring healing to Black
full support from all brar	er racism in education should be doubled up on by our public school institutions immediately and with sches of the government. Truly this should have been addressed decades ago if not centuries but never. This is top priority.
08:01 AM Macon in all local school district many alternatives to pur needed resources to nur Carolina school districts are especially important arrests are of children of I also want to lift up reco and their families. Over 2	urge the Committee to advocate for is the adoption of School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements its. Raise the Age legislation, passed in 2017, encourages these partnerships. I believe in finding as itive measures and to involving law enforcement as possible, and strongly recommend increasing ture development and implementation of these SJP agreements. Currently, fewer than half of North have these agreements in place. This is progress, but North Carolina can do better. SJP agreements because nearly half of all juvenile arrests occur in school, and a disproportionate number of those color. We need to keep children in school and out of jail, and SJP agreements help do just that. Immendations to increase funding for support and re-entry services for formerly incarcerated parents 25,000 children in North Carolina have incarcerated parents. Such circumstances can lead to toxic have a devastating impact on a child's development, learning, and behavior. North Carolina can provide
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08:16 AM Williams in all local school district many alternatives to pur needed resources to nur Carolina school districts are especially important arrests are of children of I also want to lift up reco and their families. Over 2 levels of stress that can family members of incar	urge the Committee to advocate for is the adoption of School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements is. Raise the Age legislation, passed in 2017, encourages these partnerships. I believe in finding as a litive measures and to involving law enforcement as possible, and strongly recommend increasing ture development and implementation of these SJP agreements. Currently, fewer than half of North have these agreements in place. This is progress, but North Carolina can do better. SJP agreements because nearly half of all juvenile arrests occur in school, and a disproportionate number of those color. We need to keep children in school and out of jail, and SJP agreements help do just that. In the immendations to increase funding for support and re-entry services for formerly incarcerated parents and 25,000 children in North Carolina have incarcerated parents. Such circumstances can lead to toxic have a devastating impact on a child's development, learning, and behavior. North Carolina can provide cerated individuals with the social and practical support they need to cope during the extremely ly separation. Services can range from family reunification planning to school-based support groups
08:37 AM Relations agreements in all counting have a profound impact represented in policing a the egregious impact ou modes of intervening with the servening with the egregious impact ou modes of intervening with the egregious impact out the egr	t, and school administrator, I would like to strongly advocate for School Justice Partnership es in North Carolina. This was strongly urged after the 'Raise the Age' legislation was passed and can on youth and specifically youth and communities of color, which we know are severely overctions. Further, funding, resources, training, and education is needed in law enforcement to recognize recurrent policing practices are having in order to move the focus to less punitive and more powerful the young people. School Justice Partnership agreements are a strong first step in realigning policing mane and just. Thank you for your time.
	sts Civilian Police Oversight Authority with Citizens Review Board across the state. We have a to pass for longevity and transparency of the people in NC with Police. www.nacole.org
	hly suggest NC eliminate qualified immunity among all police officers. They need to pay for their own them accountable for all infraction or violations of own policies.

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12/02/2020 08:49 AM	Community Relations	Ms Kathy Greggs	All elected officials should have racial equity training mandatory every year. And require them to do community volunteer work with local nonprofit for transparency in the community
12/02/2020 09:04 AM	Justice	Andie Morgenlander	One key strategy I would urge the Committee to advocate for is the adoption of School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements in all local school districts. Raise the Age legislation, passed in 2017, encourages these partnerships. I believe in finding as many alternatives to punitive measures and to involving law enforcement as possible, and strongly recommend increasing needed resources to nurture development and implementation of these SJP agreements. Currently, fewer than half of North Carolina school districts have these agreements in place. This is progress, but North Carolina can do better. SJP agreements are especially important because nearly half of all juvenile arrests occur in school, and a disproportionate number of those arrests are of children of color. We need to keep children in school and out of jail, and SJP agreements help do just that.
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12/02/2020	Law	Ma Kathy	Thank you!
09:27 AM	Enforcement	Ms Kathy Greggs	Please revise HB 972 on body cameras video footage to the public. Need to show transparency to the citizens if police misconduct results in criminal activities
12/02/2020 09:29 AM	Justice	Ms Kathy Greggs	Please decriminalize marijuana charges for those in prison allow exoronation for those in prison currently as well.
12/02/2020 09:32 AM	Community Relations	Ms Kathy Gregggs	SB493 Bill needs to be destroyed and start new bill to provide resources for all counties on DV victims and interventions measures to hold accountability with victim and and the assilant
12/02/2020 09:34 AM	Law Enforcement	Ms. Sarah Yerkey	One key strategy I would urge the Committee to advocate for is the adoption of School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements in all local school districts. Raise the Age legislation, passed in 2017, encourages these partnerships. I believe in finding as many alternatives to punitive measures and to involving law enforcement as possible, and strongly recommend increasing needed resources to nurture development and implementation of these SJP agreements. Currently, fewer than half of North Carolina school districts have these agreements in place. This is progress, but North Carolina can do better. SJP agreements are especially important because nearly half of all juvenile arrests occur in school, and a disproportionate number of those arrests are of children of color. We need to keep children in school and out of jail, and SJP agreements help do just that.
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12/02/2020 09:55 AM	Justice	Matthew Siegel	One key strategy I would urge the Committee to advocate for is the adoption of School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements in all local school districts. Raise the Age legislation, passed in 2017, encourages these partnerships. I believe in finding as many alternatives to punitive measures and to involving law enforcement as possible, and strongly recommend increasing needed resources to nurture development and implementation of these SJP agreements. Currently, fewer than half of North Carolina school districts have these agreements in place. This is progress, but North Carolina can do better. SJP agreements are especially important because nearly half of all juvenile arrests occur in school, and a disproportionate number of those arrests are of children of color. We need to keep children in school and out of jail, and SJP agreements help do just that.

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12/02/2020 11:28 AM	Justice	Sarah Reincke	I am advocating for School Justice Partnership agreements in all NC school districts. Currently, only half of NC school districts have these agreements, which have led to as much as an 83 percent decrease in the number of referrals and a 24 percent increase in graduation rates in other parts of the country. The school-to-prison pipeline is a well-documented national phenomenon and a huge problem here in North Carolina. For example, Black and Brown kids are suspended or referred to court at 2.5 times the rate of white kids for the same behavior. It is the States responsibility to assure education equity for all students! Thank you for your time and interest! Sarah J. Reincke
12/02/2020 11:55 AM	Justice	Molly Peeples	Please consider the realities of the school to prison pipeline when enacting any new legislation. I strongly encourage you to do away with any zero tolerance discipline policies as they unfairly impact students of color.
12/02/2020 12:14 PM	Justice	Amy Brown	I agree with the recommendations assembled by the Action Network and NC Child. One key strategy I would urge the Committee to advocate for is the adoption of School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements in all local school districts. Raise the Age legislation, passed in 2017, encourages these partnerships. I believe in finding as many alternatives to punitive measures and to involving law enforcement as possible, and strongly recommend increasing needed resources to nurture development and implementation of these SJP agreements. I also want to lift up recommendations to increase funding for support and re-entry services for formerly incarcerated parents and their families. North Carolina can provide family members of incarcerated individuals with the social and practical support
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12/02/2020 01:22 PM	Justice	Ms. Kate Pett	Please insist that all school districts engage in creating School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements to extend beyond the law enforcement systems to find alternatives to Juvenile Court involvement for students who get in trouble at school. As a former teacher and long-time public school supporter, I can attest to the inappropriate application of criminal charges to typical student misbehavior. Student behavior should not be criminalized - it is expensive and inappropriate and puts children on a path to prison.
12/02/2020 01:54 PM	Justice	Ms. Rachel Prouty	Please considering strengthening your commitment to supporting students most at risk in the school to prison pipeline. This is an urgent issue. Be bold in trying to support and protect these students. School should be a place of growth and safety, not a place of punishment and risk.
12/02/2020 02:51 PM	Law Enforcement	Disability Rights NC Susan Pollitt	December 2, 2020 Representatives Baker, Hunter and Szoka, Chairs North Carolina House Select Committee on Community Relations, Law Enforcement, and Justice Submitted by email: https://www.ncleg.gov/RequestForComments/37. Dear Representatives Baker, Hunter and Szoka, Disability Rights NC is the state's federally designated Protection and Advocacy System for People with Disabilities (the "P&A").

Category Name	Comments
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Date Submitted

We are dedicated to advancing and defending the rights of people with disabilities and securing the vision of inclusive community living for all people. We write to urge the Committee to recommend investment in community alternatives to the current system that relies on Law Enforcement to respond to people who are in a mental health or behavioral health crisis. Data shows that response by even well-meaning Officers trained in Crisis Intervention and educated about mental illness too often result in bad outcomes and trauma for all involved including our communities. Generally, people with an untreated mental illness are 16 times more likely to be killed in a police encounter than others. Nearly one quarter of police related deaths examined in a 2016 study were related to mental health or substance use. This result is the opposite of our shared goals of public safety, community inclusion and recovery. Data also shows an intersection between race and disability; many of the people in crisis that Law Enforcement respond to are black.

As North Carolina continues to develop its community mental health system it often appears as fragmented and unsupportive. Without access to services, people reach the crisis point and then Law Enforcement Officers are called to be the first—and often the only—responders to people experiencing a mental health crisis. These calls can be among the most complex and time-consuming for Officers to resolve, redirecting them from addressing other public safety concerns and violent crime. The encounters can draw intense public scrutiny. They can be potentially dangerous for Officers and for people in crisis. Without access to appropriate alternatives, Officers are often left with a set of poor choices: leave people in potentially harmful situations, bring them to hospital emergency departments, or arrest them.

Building collaborative community alternatives will save lives and money, alleviate pressure on facilities and police, offer a path for people to move into recovery, take into account the trauma people in crisis have gone through, and produce better outcomes. The Committee has heard about CAHOOTS in Eugene Oregon which reroutes 911 and non-emergency calls related to mental health, substance use, or homelessness to a team of professionals qualified to handle these situations. If needed, the professionals can call on Law Enforcement. Seeing the promise offered by non-Law Enforcement approaches to people in crisis there are now North Carolina communities coming together to build alternatives. Some of the efforts in North Carolina include the following:

- In Raleigh ACORNS, a program of the Raleigh Police Department, employs a multidisciplinary team to provide linkages and case management before a crisis, when possible, and is available to help in a crisis.
- The Charlotte Police Department has embedded mental health professionals who respond with Police to emergencies when children are on the scene.
- The Lincoln County CIT Steering Committee coordinates CIT training for law enforcement, 911 call takers, and EMS staff. Lincoln County also created a drop-off location for behavioral health crises which involved renovation of an existing behavioral health urgent care center. The county staffs a CIT trained police officer at the drop-off, with extended hours, to provide security. These investments ensure that all first responders have a place to divert individuals in crisis that is not a correctional facility or emergency department.
- The Cape Fear region established the Community Partners Coalition, a coordinating body that serves people with substance use disorders in the region. They have implemented LEAD, CIT, a Naloxone program, and the Quick Response Team a team that includes a peer support specialist for substance use, a licensed behavioral health specialist, and a part time psychiatrist or other medical professional who conduct follow-up with individuals known to have experienced an overdose.
- The Nash County Sherriff has established a walk-in option for people in that community to find help and addiction treatment.

These examples demonstrate that North Carolina communities are poised to create alternative, safe response systems in their communities and no longer overburden the criminal justice system or emergency medical facilities. These alternatives will improve police relations, save money and promote public safety. Now is the time for the General Assembly to provide the support needed and make a difference for North Carolina going forward. We urge that the Committee recommend the General Assembly support more local initiatives with pilot funding of up to 20 projects across the state.

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			Thank you for your service on this important Committee. Please contact us if we can be of assistance.
			Sincerely yours,
			Susan H. Pollitt and Luke Woollard, Attorneys Disability Rights NC
12/02/2020 03:00 PM	Justice	Greg Borom	Honorable Committee Members,
03.00 PM			Children First/Communities In Schools of Buncombe believes that every child deserves to reach their full potential. We support youth in school through our Student Support Specialists, after school through our Learning Centers and homework clubs, in homes through our Family Resource Centers, and at the state and local policy level through our advocacy efforts. Through our community-based approach, we have seen the impact of law enforcement and our justice system on child and family well-being.
			We are encouraged that the draft recommendations offer ideas and polices that could reduce parental separation from their children due to arrest or conviction, de-escalate and reduce the threat of violence from law-enforcement when responding to calls, eliminate racial disparities in law enforcement stops and sentencing, and reduce the likelihood of youth entering the juvenile justice system. We also appreciate the recommendations that create more transparency of law enforcement, hold officers accountable, and emphasize mental health resourcing.
			As one of many organizations that promoted passage of NC's "Raise the Age" legislation, we would ask that the committee include more recommendations focused on supporting this transition and improving the juvenile justice system. NC Child reports that nearly half of all juvenile arrests occur in schools and a disproportionate number of those arrests are children of color. The Committee should support all school districts completing School Justice Partnership agreements that were encouraged by the 2017 Raise the Age legislation. This framework engages the courts, the juvenile justice system, SRO/law enforcement, and school districts to decrease school-based arrests and referrals to the justice system. Another suggested recommendation is to support increased funding for local Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils (JCPC) to spend on community-based prevention programs. JCPCs have long been underfunded and been restricted to funding programs serving youth already in the system instead of on prevention strategies. Funding both prevention and intervention in local communities is long overdue.
			Finally, we lift up the committee's recommendations to increase re-entry services for formerly incarcerated parents and their families. NC Child states that over 25,000 children in NC have incarcerated parents. The stress of losing a parent to incarceration can lead to negative, life-long impacts on child health, development, and learning. Reducing the risk of arrest and prolonged jail time/incarceration for minor offenses can lower the number of children that may be separated from their parent. For those that are, we should offer family supports during and after incarceration that build resilience for the child and family.
			Thank you for your consideration, Greg Borom, Director of Advocacy Children First/Communities In Schools of Buncombe
12/02/2020 04:29 PM	Justice	Susan Bean	One key strategy I would urge the Committee to advocate for is the adoption of School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements in all local school districts. Raise the Age legislation, passed in 2017, encourages these partnerships. I believe in finding as many alternatives to punitive measures and to involving law enforcement as possible, and strongly recommend increasing needed resources to nurture development and implementation of these SJP agreements. Currently, fewer than half of North Carolina school districts have these agreements in place. This is progress, but North Carolina can do better. SJP agreements

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12/02/2020 04:32 PM	Justice	Faith Cook	One key strategy I would urge the Committee to advocate for is the adoption of School Justice Partnership (SJP) agreements in all local school districts. Raise the Age legislation, passed in 2017, encourages these partnerships. I believe in finding as many alternatives to punitive measures and to involving law enforcement as possible, and strongly recommend increasing needed resources to nurture development and implementation of these SJP agreements. Currently, fewer than half of North Carolina school districts have these agreements in place. This is progress, but North Carolina can do better. SJP agreements are especially important because nearly half of all juvenile arrests occur in school, and a disproportionate number of those arrests are of children of color. We need to keep children in school and out of jail, and SJP agreements help do just that. I also want to lift up recommendations to increase funding for support and re-entry services for formerly incarcerated parents and their families. Over 25,000 children in North Carolina have incarcerated parents. Such circumstances can lead to toxic levels of stress that can have a devastating impact on a child's development, learning, and behavior. North Carolina can provide family members of incarcerated individuals with the social and practical support they need to cope during the extremely challenging time of family separation. Services can range from family reunification planning to school-based support groups for kids.
12/02/2020 04:46 PM	Justice	Dr. Jody Escaravage	As a PhD-level social worker who has studied and practiced in child welfare and taught Bachelor's-level and Master's-level students in many issues related to social justice, I am particularly aware of the negative impacts of policies and systems that support and promote the school-to-prison pipeline for Black and Brown youth in our schools. This is arguably one of the most widespread and insidious disadvantages our institutional structures perpetuate, and mitigating (and eventually eliminating) such patterns is a key element to enacting true justice for Black and Brown folks in our communities across the State. The heightened presence and action in school districts by law enforcement only increases the risks of young people experiencing arrest and juvenile justice involvement when, in many cases, services and supports may be what is needed. Alternatives like the School Justice Partnership (SJP) Agreements allow schools to respond to young people with alternatives to Juvenile Justice involvement and may be the interruption in the pattern of mass incarceration that begins at far too young an age for disproportionately more Black and Brown youth (and subsequently adults). As part of your report to the NC General Assembly, I urge you all to do what it takes to encourage universal adoption of SJP Agreements and provision of the resources communities need to support them. Currently, fewer than half of North Carolina school districts have these agreements in place. This is progress, but North Carolina can do better. SJP agreements are especially important because nearly half of all juvenile arrests occur in school, and a disproportionate number of those arrests are of children of color. We need to keep children in school and out of jail, and SJP agreements help do just that. Furthermore, for parents who have been incarcerated, it takes an incredible amount of resources to return home and rebuild what is necessary to regain any potentiality for housing, gainful employment, and other important fundamental aspects of su

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Please consider highlighting universal adoption of SJP Agreements and an increase in funding for support and re-entry services for formerly incarcerated parents and their families as important elements of your report to the General Assembly. Thank you for your time.